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## **Editorial: Think before you hit 'send'**

Don't put anything in an email that you wouldn't mind seeing on the front page of the newspaper. This modern cliché has come to life for several state and national figures recently.

"[Robin Paul,] a manager at the Roudebush Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Indianapolis appears to mock the mental health problems of returning combat veterans in an email to her employees," reported Tony Cook of The Indianapolis Star March 8. "The email ... contains photographs of a toy Christmas elf posing as a patient in what appears to be the hospital's transitional clinic for returning veterans. In one photograph, the elf pleads for Xanax. In another, he hangs himself with an electrical cord."

By Tuesday, Paul had apologized, but not resigned, further outraging several politicians and organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Sen. Dan Coats and Reps. Jackie Walorski and Susan Brooks.

And then there's Hillary Rodham Clinton, who apparently is dead-set on proving all her family's critics right.

"Clinton exclusively used a personal email account to conduct government business as secretary of state," reported The New York Times' Michael S.

Schmidt March 2. Clinton hastily assembled a press conference Tuesday at the United Nations in which she defended her actions.

“Between March 2009 after she was sworn in as secretary and her departure in early 2013, Clinton sent and received 62,320 emails,” reported The Washington Post’s Anne Gearan and Philip Rucker Tuesday. “Clinton said she had deleted [31,830] emails that she believed were ‘within the scope of my personal privacy’ — including, she said, correspondence about daughter Chelsea’s wedding, her mother Dorothy’s funeral, her yoga routines and family vacations.”

How are we supposed to believe her if we can’t see all the emails? This is why most people have more than one address in the first place: to separate work and private life. Even local officials such as city development specialist David Tharp carry two devices for this very reason.

Coincidentally, today marks the beginning of Sunshine Week, a “national initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information,” according to the official website. “The Associated Press on Wednesday sued the State Department to force the release of email ... [from] Clinton’s tenure,” reported AP’s Steve Peoples.

Think before you press “send.” On the whiteboard of history, the Internet draws in permanent marker, not dry-erase.